

I strongly believe that even as Congress works to reduce our nation's deficit, our first priority must be the creation of jobs for American workers. We know that we cannot reduce the debt without growing our economy; we cannot have growth without job creation; and we cannot create jobs without small businesses.

In fact, 64 percent of all new job growth in this country comes from small businesses and our small businesses make up over 95% of all employers in the United States, according to the Small Business Administration. They are our primary job creators and the backbone of our communities and our economy. That is why when we talk about the need to create jobs, we also need to be talking to small business owners about what they need to grow and succeed.



*Congresswoman Matsui leads a Small Business Roundtable at McClellan Business Park in late September.*

I recently held a series of events in Sacramento to hear directly from local businesses about the challenges they are facing. I hosted two small business roundtables in Sacramento, as well as took part in a White House Business Council Roundtable with United States Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. In these meetings, I heard directly about the need for banks to be lending more to small businesses. Even though many of America's banks have almost fully

recovered from the financial meltdown, they continue to sit on large sums of money, instead of lending it out to the small businesses that need a loan to purchase new equipment, expand their businesses and most critically – hire new workers.

One of the participants in a recent roundtable was Patricia Murakami of Ambrosia Café and Catering in downtown Sacramento. As a small business owner, Patricia knows firsthand how our economic climate is affecting businesses today – and what Congress can do to give our economy the biggest return on our investment. When asked how public officials in Washington could help local businesses, she said, “I believe Congress should be providing financial relief to small businesses so that we can create new jobs. I also believe Congress must continue to invest in education and job training so that our local workforce is prepared to take advantage of growing industries.”

I couldn't agree more. That is why I support the [American Jobs Act](#) – legislation that would create jobs immediately for American workers. It would do so by investing in technology and infrastructure to keep our workforce and economy ahead of foreign competitors. The legislation also provides important tax incentives to encourage businesses to expand their workforce. Small business owners are asking Congress to pass a jobs bill, and it is time for Congress to listen and take action.

I will continue to urge my colleagues to pass the American Jobs Act because Sacramentans cannot wait any longer. For more information on the American Jobs Act, please visit [my website](#).

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me with questions or to share your story.